

(12) **United States Patent**
Williams

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(54) **VALVE THAT IS NORMALLY CLOSED IN THE FREE STATE**

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 1105 days.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

(51) **Int. Cl.**
A61M 5/14 (2006.01)
F16K 1/12 (2006.01)

A valve system comprising a valve design in which the valve is normally closed is disclosed. The normally closed valve can comprise a circular valve seal face formed by the underside of a rim of an elastomeric valve boss and a circular valve seat, which is formed by the rim of a through-hole molded into, for example, a plastic cassette, such that the valve seal face, the valve seat, and the through hole are concentric. The valve boss can be a hollow “mushroom” shaped valve boss, or a conical-shaped valve boss. If no force is applied to the inside surface of the valve boss, no fluid can pass through the valve as the valve seal face rests against the valve seat as a result of the steady free-state load created by the stretch of the valve boss over the slightly longer through hole. When a force is applied to the inside surface of the valve boss, the valve seal face is displaced from the valve seat, allowing fluid between the valve seal face and valve seat and then to pass between the valve boss and the inside surface of the through hole.

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC **F16K 1/12** (2013.01)

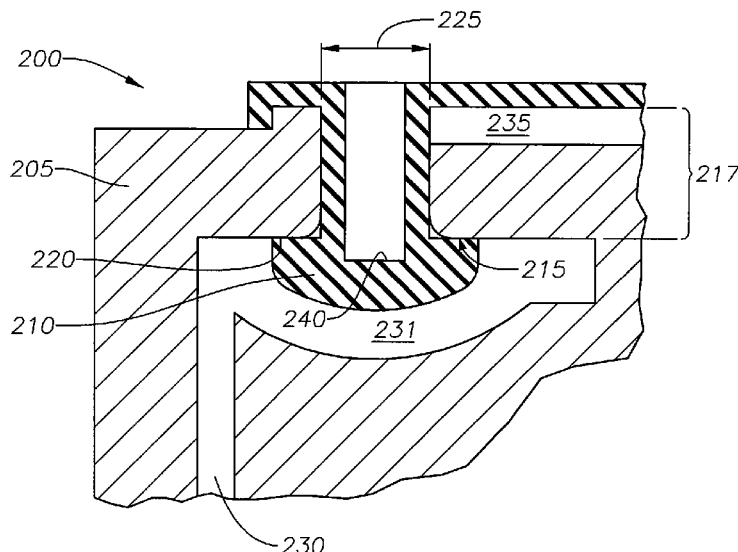
(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC ... F16K 1/12; A61M 1/0058; A61M 2205/12; A61M 5/14
USPC 417/477.2; 604/131, 246, 247, 249, 604/256, 289, 30, 33
See application file for complete search history.

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9 Claims, 4 Drawing Sheets



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Fig. 1

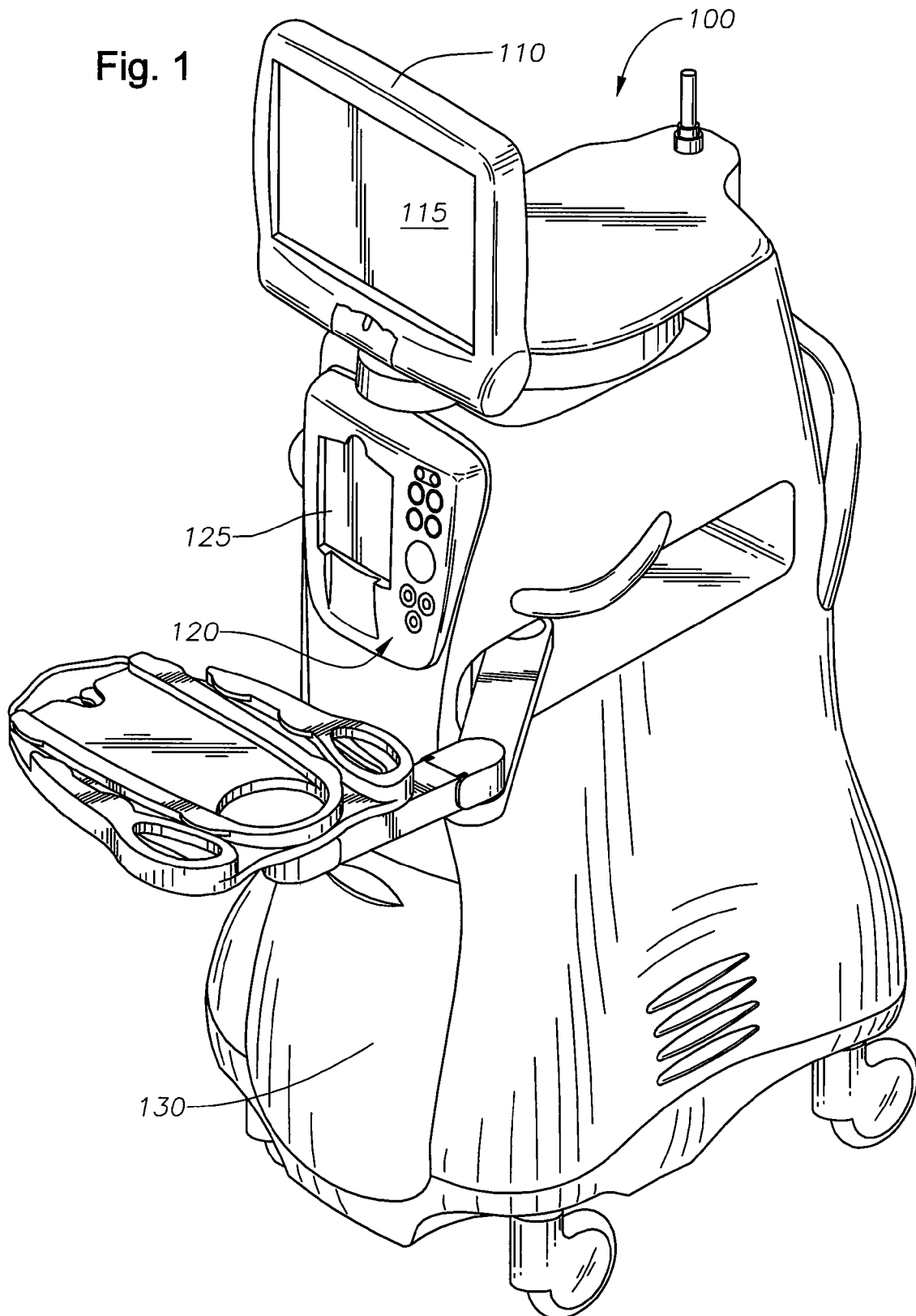


Fig. 2

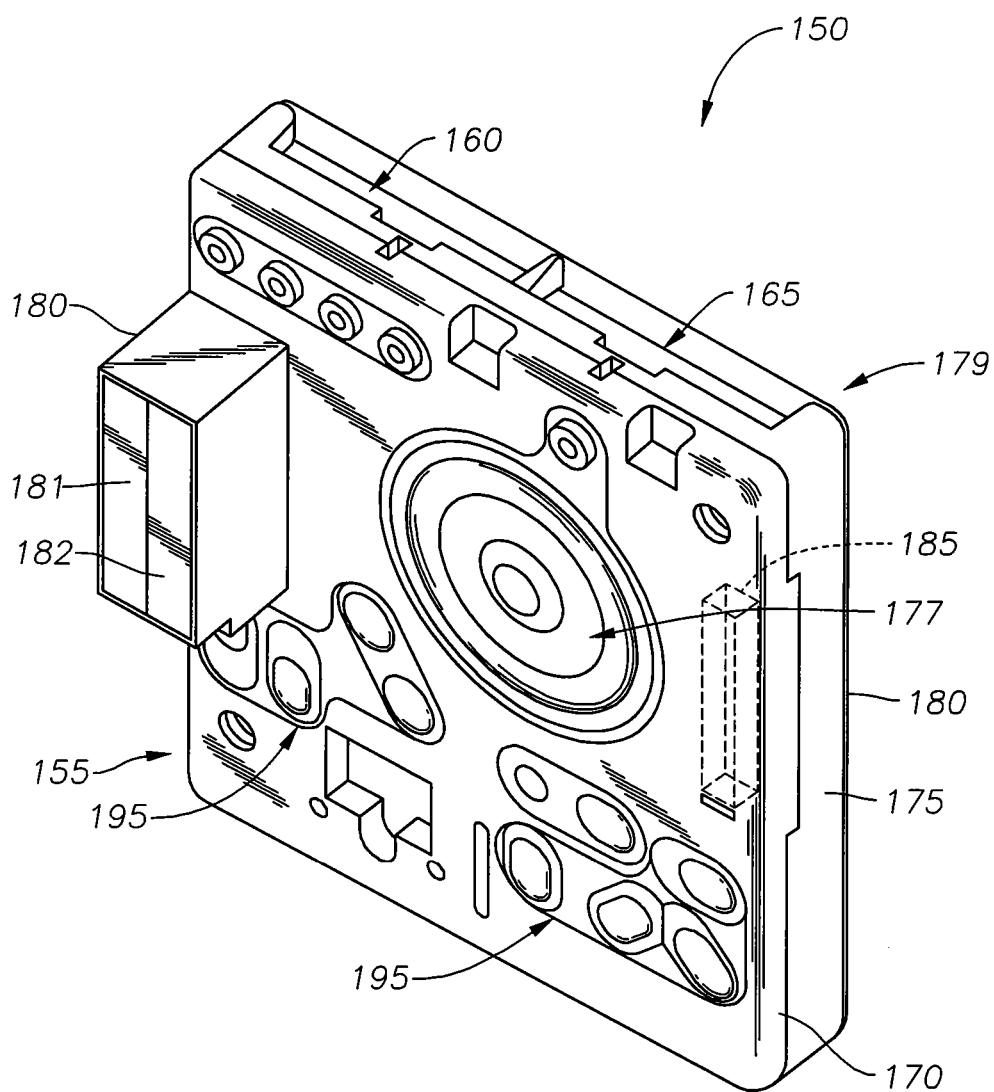
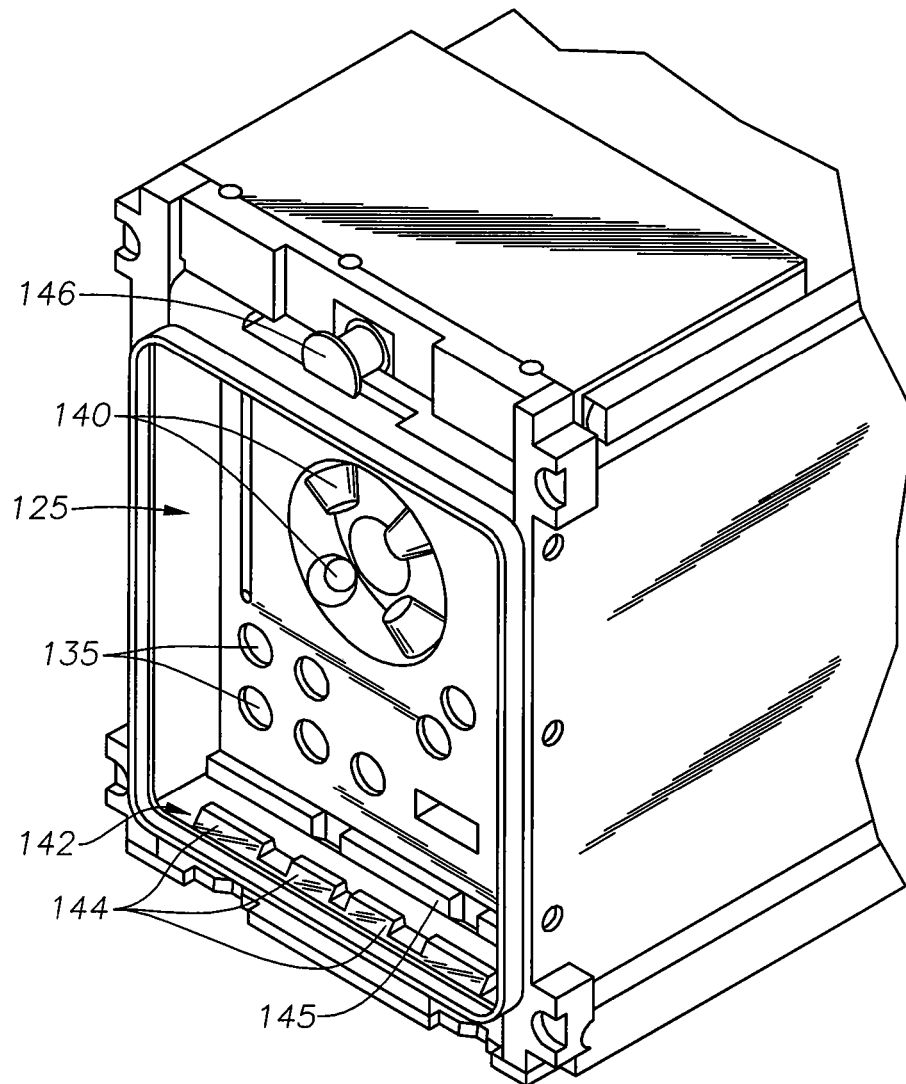
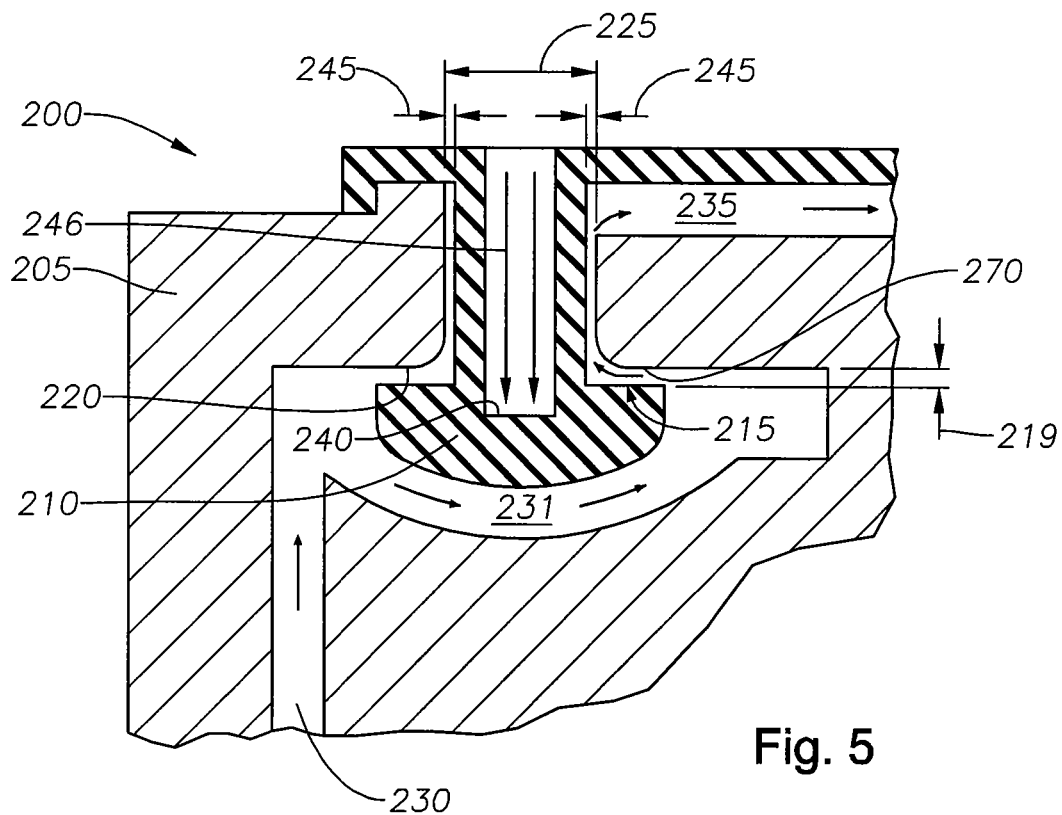
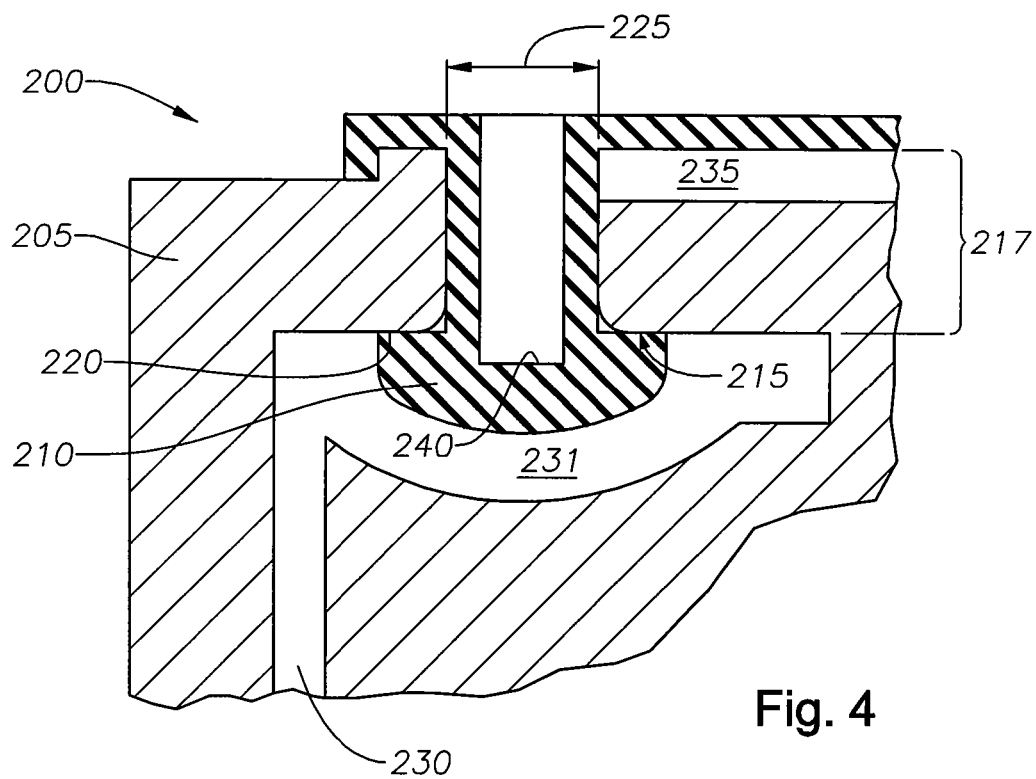


Fig. 3





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VALVE THAT IS NORMALLY CLOSED IN THE FREE STATE

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. §119 to U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/847,159, filed Sep. 26, 2006, the entire contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.

TECHNICAL FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to surgical systems and methods. More particularly, the present invention relates to valve design employed in surgical cassettes used in an ophthalmic surgical system.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The human eye can suffer a number of maladies causing mild deterioration to complete loss of vision. While contact lenses and eyeglasses can compensate for some ailments, ophthalmic surgery is required for others. Generally, ophthalmic surgery is classified into posterior segment procedures, such as vitreoretinal surgery, and anterior segment procedures, such as cataract surgery. More recently, combined anterior and posterior segment procedures have been developed.

The surgical instrumentation used for ophthalmic surgery can be specialized for anterior segment procedures or posterior segment procedures or support both. In any case, the surgical instrumentation often requires the use of associated consumables such as surgical cassettes, fluid bags, tubing, handpiece tips and other consumables.

A surgical cassette can provide a variety of functions depending on the procedure and surgical instrumentation. For example, surgical cassettes for cataract surgeries (e.g., phacoemulsification procedures) help manage irrigation and aspiration flows into and out of a surgical site. Surgical cassettes can also provide support for fluid bags, a manifold for directing vacuum/pressure to surgical instrumentation, and other functionality.

During a surgical procedure, such as a cataract surgery, fluid flow is controlled by valves within the surgical cassette. However, current cassette designs utilize valves that are classified as “normally open,” meaning that the valves are open unless they are actively engaged in order to close them. These normally open valves allow fluid ingress into the cassette’s (and therefore the surgical system’s) aspiration path during cassette installation and removal. Further, normally open valves can result in the dribbling of liquids from the cassette ports when removed from the receiver, which limits the overall cleanliness of a surgical procedure. Further still, for some applications, normally open valves do not “fail safe” in a loss of power situation, resulting in potentially unwanted fluid flow when power is lost.

Therefore, a need exists for a cassette valve design that can control the flow of liquids within the cassette while reducing or eliminating the problems of prior art cassette valve designs and that can provide increased functionality, reliability, cleanliness and safety.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Embodiments of the present invention provide a valve design in which the valve is normally closed. The normally

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closed valve can comprise a circular valve seal face formed by the underside of a rim of an elastomeric valve boss and a circular valve seat, which is formed by the rim of a through-hole molded into, for example, a plastic cassette, such that the valve seal face, the valve seat, and the through hole are concentric. The valve boss can be a hollow “mushroom” shaped valve boss, or a conical-shaped valve boss. If no force is applied to the inside surface of the valve boss, no fluid can pass through the valve as the valve seal face rests against the valve seat as a result of the steady free-state load created by the stretch of the valve boss over the slightly longer through hole. When a force is applied to the inside surface of the valve boss, the valve seal face is displaced from the valve seat, allowing fluid between the valve seal face and valve seat and then to pass between the valve boss and the inside surface of the through hole.

In a preferred embodiment, the valve design can be used in a fluidics cassette adapted for use in ophthalmic surgery.

Embodiments of the present invention provide an advantage by eliminating unwanted fluid ingress into a cassette’s aspiration path during cassette installation, during cassette setup, during the procedure, and upon cassette removal.

Embodiments of the present invention provide another advantage by preventing dribbling from the cassette aspiration ports after removal, thereby improving the overall cleanliness of a surgical procedure.

Embodiments of the present invention provide another advantage by providing active control to fail safe during a power loss condition.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

A more complete understanding of the present invention and the advantages thereof may be acquired by referring to the following description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which like reference numbers indicate like features and wherein:

FIG. 1 is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of a surgical console;

FIG. 2 is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of a surgical cassette;

FIG. 3 is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of a cassette receiver;

FIG. 4 is a cross-section view of the present invention when no force is applied to the inside surface of the hollow mushroom-shaped valve boss;

FIG. 5 is a cross-section view of the present invention when force is applied to the inside surface of the hollow mushroom-shaped valve boss.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Preferred embodiments of the invention are illustrated in the FIGURES, like numerals being used to refer to like and corresponding parts of the various drawings.

Embodiments of the present invention include a valve that is normally closed, meaning under static steady-state conditions no fluid can pass through the valve. According to one embodiment, the valve seal face can be the rim on an underside of an elastomeric hollow mushroom or conical shaped valve boss and the valve seat can be the rim of a through-hole designed such that no fluid can pass through the valve unless a force is applied to the inner surface of the valve boss. According to a preferred embodiment, the valve would be employed in a fluidics cassette adapted for use in an ophthalmic surgical console.

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FIG. 1 is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of an ophthalmic surgical console **100**. Surgical console **100** can include a swivel monitor **110** that has touch screen **115**. Swivel monitor **110** can be positioned in a variety of orientations for whomever needs to see touch screen **115**. Swivel monitor **110** can swing from side to side, as well as rotate and tilt. Touch screen **115** provides a graphical user interface (“GUI”) that allows a user to interact with console **100**.

Surgical console **100** also includes a connection panel **120** used to connect various tools and consumables to surgical console **100**. Connection panel **120** can include, for example, a coagulation connector, balanced salt solution receiver, connectors for various hand pieces and a fluid management system (“FMS”) or cassette receiver **125**. Surgical console **100** can also include a variety of user friendly features, such as a foot pedal control (e.g., stored behind panel **130**) and other features. In operation, a cassette (not shown) can be placed in cassette receiver **125** and held in place with clamps to minimize movement during use.

FIG. 2 is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of a surgical cassette **150**. Cassette **150** can provide a closed system fluidic device that can be discarded following a surgical procedure. Cassette **150** can include a cassette body **155** and portions that interface with the clamp (e.g., indicated generally at clamping zones **160** and **165**) projecting from the cassette body **155**. Cassette **150** can be formed of ABS plastic or other suitable material. In the embodiment shown, cassette **150** is formed from three primary sections: an inner or surgical console interface section **170** that faces the surgical console when cassette **150** is inserted into surgical console **100**, a middle section **175** and a cover plate **179**. The various sections of cassette **150** can be coupled together via a press fit, interlocking tabs, chemical bonding, thermal bonding, mechanical fasteners or other attachment mechanism known in the art. In other embodiments, cassette **150** can be formed of a single piece or multiple pieces.

Surgical console interface section **170** can face the console during use and provide an interface for fluid flow channels (e.g., flow channel **177** for the peristaltic pump provided by an elastomeric pump membrane), valves (e.g., infusion/aspiration valves indicated generally at **195**), and other features to manage fluid flow. Cassette **150** can also attach to a fluid bag (not shown) to collect fluids during a procedure. Pins located on a cassette receiver (shown in FIG. 3 at **135**) manipulate elastomeric valves **195** such that fluid flow within the cassette can be controlled without fluid from the cassette contacting the surgical console or cassette receiver.

Surgical cassette **150**, according to various embodiments of the present invention, includes chambers to hold fluids for aspiration and infusion. For example, chamber housing **180** can include two infusion chambers **181/182**. A third chamber **185** can be internal to cassette **150** on the opposite side of cassette **150** from chamber housing **180** (e.g., at the side of cassette **150** indicated by **190**). According to one embodiment, the level of fluid in the chambers can be determined by various means that will be known to those having skill in the art.

FIG. 3 is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of cassette receiver **125** without a cassette. Cassette receiver **125** can have various configurations of pins (indicated generally at **135**) designed to impinge upon the elastomeric valve membranes of the surgical cassette **150** as a means to control fluid flow within the cassette. Cassette receiver **125** can further include an opening to allow peristaltic pump rollers **140** to contact the surgical cassette **150** during operation. One embodiment of a peristaltic pump and

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complimentary cassette is described in U.S. Pat. No. 6,293,926 to Sorensen, which is hereby fully incorporated by reference herein.

The surgical cassette **150**, in the embodiment of FIG. 3, is held in place by a clamp having a bottom rail **142** and a top rail (not shown). Each rail can have clamping fingers (e.g., clamp finger **144**) that contact the cassette in corresponding clamping zones. A release button **146** is pressed to initiate release of the cassette from the clamp. Depending on the surgical console **100**, the cassette release process can include several steps, including venting of pressure or fluids, disengaging the clamps or other steps. The configuration of FIG. 3 is provided by way of example. The form factor of cassette receiver **125**, placement and number of pins and other features of cassette receiver **125** can depend on the surgical console **100**, the surgical procedure being performed or on other factors.

FIG. 4 is a cross-section view of one embodiment of a valve **200** of the present invention in a steady state condition. A hollow mushroom shaped valve boss **210** is located within through-hole **225** of housing **205** (which, in a preferred embodiment, would be the plastic body of a surgical cassette **150**). Circular valve seat **220** is located at the rim of through hole **225**, and circular valve seal **215** is located at the rim of mushroom shaped valve boss **210**. Valve **200** can be configured such that valve seat **220**, valve seal face **215**, and through-hole **225** are concentric. The length **217** of through-hole **225** is slightly longer than the unstretched length of **210**; thus, when no force is applied to inner surface **240** of valve boss **210**, contact is maintained between valve seal face **215** and valve seat **220** due to the steady free-state load created by the stretch of the valve boss **210** over the slightly longer length of the through-holed **225**. As a result, fluid entering chamber **231** from channel **230** will not be able to pass between valve seal face **215** and valve seat **220** and move into channel **235**. As a result of this configuration, valve **200**, in steady state condition, is closed and prohibits fluid flow.

FIG. 5 is a cross-section view of valve **200** with a force, indicated by arrows **246**, being applied to the inside surface **240** of valve boss **210**. Force **246** has the effect of displacing the mushroom shaped head of valve boss **210** a distance **219** such that valve seal face **215** and valve seat **220** are no longer in contact. The stretching of the hollow elastomeric cylindrical portion of valve boss **210** also causes the outside diameter of valve boss **210** to contract, which results in a radial gap **245** between the outside wall of cylindrical valve boss **210** and an inner wall **270** of through-hole **225**. Gaps **219** and **245** allow fluid entering chamber **231** from channel **230** to pass through the valve and into channel **235**.

While the present invention has been described with reference to particular embodiments, it should be understood that the embodiments are illustrative and that the scope of the invention is not limited to these embodiments. Many variations, modifications, additions and improvements to the embodiments described above are possible. It is contemplated that these variations, modifications, additions and improvements fall within the scope of the invention as detailed in the following claims.

The invention claimed is:

1. A valve system comprising:

a housing containing a fluid inlet channel and a fluid outlet channel, wherein the fluid inlet channel and the fluid outlet channel are connected by a through-hole; and an elastomeric valve boss having a hollow elastomeric cylindrical portion forming an interior cavity and a head portion, the cavity including an opening at a first end of the elastomeric cylindrical portion opposite the head portion, the elastomeric cylindrical portion extending

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concentrically through the through-hole such that, under static conditions, a rim on an underside of the head portion of the valve boss forms a valve seal face that maintains contact with a rim of the through-hole preventing fluid flow through the through-hole, the rim of the through-hole forming a valve seat, the valve boss having an open position wherein the elastomeric cylindrical portion is axially stretched by application of a force to an interior surface of the cavity to displace the valve seal face from the valve seat to form a gap therebetween resulting in a fluid connection through the through-hole between the fluid inlet channel and the fluid outlet channel.

2. The valve system of claim 1, wherein the head portion is a hollow mushroom-shaped head portion having an interior surface.

3. The valve system of claim 2, wherein the fluid connection further comprises a radial gap formed between an outer surface of the elastomeric cylindrical portion that is con-

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tracted due to the application of the force to the interior surface of the cavity and an outer surface of the through-hole adjacent thereto.

4. The valve system of claim 1, wherein the valve boss is a conical-shaped valve boss, and wherein an outer diameter of the conical-shaped valve boss forms a sealing surface against an edge of the through-hole.

5. The valve system of claim 1, wherein the housing is a surgical cassette.

6. The valve system claim 5, wherein the surgical cassette is adapted for one time use followed by disposal.

7. The valve system of claim 5, wherein the surgical cassette is adapted for insertion into a cassette receiver located on an ophthalmic surgical console.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein the cassette receiver on the ophthalmic surgical console comprises means of applying a force to the interior surface of the cavity.

9. The valve system of claim 1, wherein a wall of the cylindrical portion defining the cavity extends along an entire length of the cavity.

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